(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Ministry of Defence, in December, 2006, has given full powers within the budget provisions to Ordnance Factory Board for sanction of expenditure for applied R and D for carrying out product and process improvement and development of new products. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has also been involving a large number of Industrial Partners in various developmental projects.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Further signing of an 'Integrity Pact' would be considered between government department and the bidder for schemes exceeding Rs. 100 crore as per Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP)-2008. The Integrity Pact is a binding agreement between the agency and bidders for specific contracts.

(e) Does not arise.

Same pay scale and Rank pay for military nurses

1740. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Sixth Central Pay Commission (CPC) had recommended for same pay scale and Rank pay for military nurses with rest of army;

(b) whether Government has received any memorandum against this recommendation;

(c) if so, what is Government's view on it; and

(d) when Government is planning to implement the recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) The Sixth Central Pay Commission had recommended that the pay band and grade pay of similarly designated posts in Service Officers cadre and Military Nursing Service (MNS) cadre should be the same but the rates of Military Service Pay be lower for MNS.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The Government has decided to enhance the grade pay of middle level officers (excluding MNS) of the Services.

Purchase of substandard bullet-proof vehicle

1741. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether army purchased 200 substandard bullet-proof vehicles and provided the same to commanders carrying out counter-terrorism operations in Jammu and Kashmir and North-East endangering their lives;

(b) whether Northern and Eastern Commands and C and AG have found that the bullet-proof vehicles bought by the army were having several problems/defects in their functioning; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken against the officers responsible for compromising the safety of its commanders and for causing financial loss to the State?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) Procurement of 200 Bullet Proof Vehicles was made in July, 2005 based on technical specifications formulated by the Army in the year 2000. Army decided to procure a "in-service" vehicle with bullet-proofing to save time in induction of a new vehicle platform and save precious lives. During the exploitation of the above vehicles, certain defects were noticed, namely, (a) lack of adequate pulling power in mountains, (b) low ground clearance, (c) large turning radius, (d) overheating of tyres and (e) manual adjustment of rear view mirror by lowering the bullet proof window glass. The Comptroller and Auditor General in Para 2.1 of their Report No. CA 4 of 2008 (Defence Services) have, *inter alia*, also pointed out the above defects in these vehicles.

In so far as the level of protection provided by the vehicles is concerned, the Army has found it quite adequate and it continues to deploy these vehicles in Northern and Eastern Commands, despite lower pulling power. The protection accorded to troops travelling in these vehicles has proved to be foolproof against terrorists' small arms fire.

While preparing Action Taken Note on the aforesaid para of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General, which is at present under process, all relevant issues including the necessity for fixing responsibility will be kept in view.

Incidents of maltreatment in military hospitals

†1742. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the incidents of maltreatment have increased in military hospitals during the last few months;

(b) the number of cases investigated during the last year; and

(c) the number of the people against whom action has been taken?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) There has been no increase in the incidents of maltreatment in military hospitals during the last few months. The number of cases investigated during the last year *i.e.* 1st December, 2007 to 30th November, 2008 are follows:—

Month	
December, 2007	04
January, 2008	03
February, 2008	03
March, 2008	01

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.